

Message Text

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PAGE 01 FRANKF 05180 271557Z
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2440
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TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, JIMMY) GW, WB

SUBJ: BACKGROUND AND HISTORY - FRANKFURT CITY HALL (DER ROEMER)

1. THE "ROEMERBERG" SQUARE IS NAMED FOR THE HOUSE "ZUM ROEMER" WHICH WAS ACQUIRED AS CITY HALL IN 1405. THIS SQUARE ON THE BANKS OF THE MAIN RIVER DATES FROM A ROMAN SETTLEMENT AND IS THE SITE OF EVENTS CENTRAL TO FRANKFURT'S HISTORY: IMPERIAL CORONATION PROCESSIONS, MEDIEVAL PASSION PLAYS, TOURNAMENTS, FAIRS, AND OTHER IMPORTANT CEREMONIES AND FESTIVITIES. DURING CORONATIONS, GOLD AND SILVER COINS WERE TOSSED TO THE THRONGS OF SPECTATORS, AND WINE FLOWED FREELY FROM THE FOUNTAIN OF JUSTICE IN THE SQUARE.

2. THE THREE GABLED GOTHIC HOUSES COMPRISING THE PRESENT CITY HALL INCLUDE THE ORIGINAL "ZUM ROEMER" AND THE LATER ADDITIONS "LOEWENSTEIN" AND "ALT LIMPURG." THE "ROEMER" SUBSEQUENTLY BECAME THE SYMBOL OF THE AUTHORITY OF THE FREE IMPERIAL CITY TO WHICH FRANKFURT WAS ELEVATED UNDER CHARLES IV.

3. THE PORTRAITS OF THE EMPERORS IN THE HALL OF EMPERORS (KAISERSAAL), FROM CHARLEMANGE, THE FIRST (768-814) TO FRANCIS
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II, THE LAST (1792-1860), COMMERMORATE ITS POSITION IN THE HISTORY OF THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE, WHEN IT WAS THE SCENE OF THE CORONATION BANQUETS FOR THE NEWLY-CROWNED EMPEROR AND THE IMPERIAL ELECTORS. THE PORTRAITS, BY GERMAN AND AUSTRIAN PAINTERS, DATE FROM THE MID-19TH CENTURY AND WERE RESTORED

FLOOWING WORLD WAR II. TODAY THE HALL OF EMPERORS IS THE SETTING

FOR STATE VISITS AND RECEPTIONS HOSTED BY THE LORD MAYOR.
LEHMANN

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